

Iran's nuclear weapons program and standing up for Israel, but I sincerely hope that we can restore regular order and that this bill can be fully considered by all the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in due time.

Finally, there is no emergency. This deal—if there is one—won't be concluded until the summer, so there is plenty of time to wait until March 24, find out whether we have a deal, and then act to be able to be in a posture to opine on that deal and to deal with it accordingly. There is no reason to accelerate this process in this way, to go outside of regular order, bypass the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and come directly to the floor.

I know I cannot object to the rule XIV process under the rules, but I say to my colleagues, if this is the process, then I will have no choice but to use my voice and my vote against any motion to proceed. I hope that is not the case. I have worked too hard to get to this moment. But if that is the way we are going to proceed, then I will certainly have to vote against proceeding at that time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to oppose S.J. Res. 8, a misguided resolution that targets workers' right to organize and hurts working families in Hawaii and around the country.

Union election rules haven't been updated since the 1970s. The National Labor Relations Board—or NLRB—is trying to bring union election rules into the 21st century, but today's Senate resolution will block the NLRB's commonsense updates.

The right to organize is a crucial part of our democracy. Unions have helped build the middle class in Hawaii and nationwide. It is disappointing that instead of working to create jobs or help the middle class get ahead, today we are debating whether to make it harder to join a union.

Workers wishing to join a union already face many barriers. For example, companies have significant opportunities to make their case to employees about why they should oppose a union. Meanwhile, unions are not allowed to visit the worksite to make their case for joining a union, and they do not have access to modern contact information such as emails and cell phone numbers—unbelievable as that may sound—to contact workers.

In addition, companies can delay union elections with what amounts to frivolous litigation and appeal after appeal. Nationwide, in contested cases workers already have to wait an average of 4 months to vote whether to join a union.

While most employers in Hawaii want to support their workers, there have been those rare cases of companies exploiting the current system to prevent workers from having a voice in the workplace.

Let me share a situation that happened in Hawaii where workers had not been given a raise in 6 years. They asked a local union for help in organizing their union. In the runup to the union elections, the workers were forced to attend one-on-one or group meetings on work time where their management could convince workers to vote against the union. This company hired a private security firm and posted security guards outside the voting area during the vote. Workers felt intimidated.

The company appealed election results and NLRB rulings over and over again, adding delay after delay and revote after revote. In July 2005, 40 months after a petition was first filed to hold an election, the NLRB finally certified a union for the workers. Still, the company continued to offer appeal after appeal of the election results and even fired 31 union supporters in 2007. Finally, at the end of 2012, 10 years later, the certified union reached its first union contract.

Remember, I noted that where most workplaces are organized, things are done in 4 months. That is not always the case. The NLRB's updated union election rules would help reduce this kind of intimidation and delay, which happens all too often, and would allow organizers to contact workers by email and cell phone. It is pretty astounding that we had to have a rule change in order to make this kind of commonsense change available to organizers—which, by the way, this resolution which I ask my colleagues to vote against disallows.

The rule will make it easier for small businesses to follow labor election laws. Currently, big corporations can use expensive lawyers to litigate and prevent union elections, while small businesses don't have those kinds of resources.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting these modest, commonsense updates to NLRB rules and voting no on the resolution. Let's stand with working men and women in this country and support the middle class.

I want to end with a quote from one of our labor organizers and leaders in Hawaii, Hawaii Laborers' business manager Peter Ganaban. In a recent piece in Pacific Business News, Mr. Ganaban explained that "Hawaii's union climate is an extension of our local culture of helping each other and caring for our communities."

Allowing workers a fair choice and a fair chance to join a union is the least we can do for our workers in the middle class.

I yield my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 95, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 95) designating March 3, 2015, as "World Wildlife Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 95) was agreed to. The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD—Continued

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here for the main purpose of vigorously opposing S.J. Res. 8, and to support the National Labor Relations Board's recent rule to modernize the process that workers use if they decide they want to form a union and bargain collectively.

The new NLRB rule makes modest but highly important changes to improve the overall consistency and efficiency of the election process, allowing workers to vote for or against the creation of a union in a fair and timely way. This rule is long overdue, and in Connecticut I have seen—and in my personal experience with the NLRB—how important it is.

As I go around Connecticut, I consistently hear of problems when workers seek to gain representation to form a union. It is cumbersome, costly, time consuming, and is prone to needless delays. It involves needless litigation, and it creates uncertainty for all involved. This rule change—this new rule—is not only good for working men and women, it is also good for businesses by reducing—and in some cases eliminating—the cost, time, and uncertainty that are aggravating and expensive. It is a small step toward a level playing field and a guarantee that companies respect workers' rights to organize and gain the benefits of union membership.

Very simply, here is what the rule does: It removes obstacles to forming unions and requires businesses to postpone litigation over member eligibility issues until after workers join a union.